/40 cont./

292 293 [531] Aside from the txumbé, there is also a belt for exclusively ritual use, the kiákuahá, richly decorated with ipotý, flowers of toucan feathers woven into the cloth itself; it may even be worn over the txumbé; it is given only one turn around the belly, and, to fasten it, the terminal fringes are tied in front.

291 [126] The ponchito is a small poncho of very tightly woven cotton. In 1950 I acquired from Paí Vitaliano a specimen with a width varying between 50 and 55 centimeters; the average length, 125 centimeters; /41/ central opening for the head, 30 centimeters. [286] Along the narrow ends, fringes (ipotý) 10 centimeters long, each one of two twisted threads of the warp itself, there are similar fringes in the central part of the cloth, distributed in four bundles, [283] one to the right and one to the left of each one of the ends of the central opening. The cloth is of thread of white cotton, except for two very narrow longitudinal bands of maroon color that run through it from top to bottom. Onto each shoulder is sewed a circular piece 291 53 237 of toucan skin with yellow and orange feathers; on the chest, four flowers of feathers trimmed with threads adorned with feathers, and four more on the back. One of the flowers of the front part, of yel- [192] low and orange toucan (tfkã) feathers and red canindé (kanindé) feathers, is called kurundúá; nandúá are the other flowers of toucan feathers, while the ornaments on the shoulders are called 291 ñemombáéhá. According to Paí Vitaliano, the latter are "imita- [114] tion of the things of Ñandedjára"; I have not obtained a translation of the different names, all "given by Ñandedjára himself." Paí Vitaliano's ponchito is no longer complete; it lacks, on the chest and on the back, an elongated cotton ornament, without feathers, called iporavõhaguê. The care with which the ponchito is adorned 292 and the words with which the doctor-sorcerer refers to the symbolism 178 of the ornaments of plumes, relating them to the world of the gods, 798 leaves no shadow of doubt about the religious significance of the piece. Although it has the shape of a common poncho in a smaller size, the ponchito, at least nowadays, is not common clothing, but has a ritual function. I only saw it used by doctor-sorcerers. Paí Chiquinho always put it on, by way of greeting, when I visited him

5: Métraux E-4 (no date) 1948 SM4 Guarani SM4

or covered with a basketry sheath in the center. A small bulge at each end made of wrapped bark strips prevents the fiber bowstring from slipping. Archers wear wrist guards of human hair or of cotton (*Chiripá*). The main types of arrowheads found in the tropical area are used by the *Caingud:* Lanceolate taquara heads; tapering sticks, plain or barbed on one or both sides; and conical wooden plugs for stunning birds.

The war arrows of the ancient *Guaraní* were often tipped with human bones.

The arrow shafts are made either of the native tacuati reed (*Merostachys argyronema*) or more commonly of the imported tacuapi, or caña de Castilla (*Arundo donax*).

The feathering is of the Eastern Brazilian, or arched type. The pellet-bow is widely used by young *Caingud* boys to shoot birds or small rodents.[8] The missiles are small clay pellets.

Caingud clubs are either swordlike with cutting edges or plain sticks with a square cross section and a basketry sheath around the handle. Sometimes they taper into a point. The *Guaraní* were acquainted with the sling but found little use for it in their forested habitat.

The *Guaraní* warriors whom the Spaniards fought in the 16th century carried shields, often decorated with feathers. This defensive weapon has not been reported since the 17th century.

SOCIAL AND POLITICAL ORGANIZATION

Among the ancient *Guaraní*, the social unit was probably the large extended patrilineal family—perhaps the sib. Sometimes as many as 60 families lived under the same roof. Each community had a chief, but the actual power was often in the hands of a shaman. Many of the great *Guaraní* leaders who resisted the Spaniards in the 17th century were shamans endowed with divine prestige. Some ancient chiefs extended their influence over a fairly wide area. A general council of chiefs and adult men decided community and district affairs and elected war chiefs who commanded obedience during expeditions.

All *Apapocuva-Guaraní* chiefs, for at least a hundred years, have been shamans who have reached the highest rank within their profession. Like the ancient chiefs, they have been credited with supernatural power and with miracles performed on behalf of their people.

A *Guaraní* chief was succeeded by his eldest son unless there was some stronger member of the family. However, an eloquent man distinguished in warfare might become chief. Persons dissatisfied with their headman might secede and start a new settlement under another leader. Chiefs of *Caingud* communities in Paraguay have a Spanish title and carry a stick as symbol of their office. Fifty years ago, a few villages were administered as in Jesuit times, by a cacique mayor and cacique menor, a sargento, and

[8] For a good description of the *Guaraní* pellet-bow, see Anaya, 1899, 2:67.